

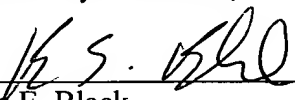
Independent claim 1 recites a system having "at least one link trained and set to idle status." Independent claim 7 recites a methods in which at least one link is trained at an optimal rate and the status of that link is set to idle. In contrast, in Rahman there is no training of links and, in particular, no training of links to operate at an optimal rate. The links operate at whichever rate they are capable and the system compensates for the differential delay of each link by using a buffer so that transmissions are combined in the correct sequence. Rahman, Col. 3, lines 1-4. Therefore, none of the links are trained.

Klink and Wang do not address this deficiency of Rahman. In particular, each of the service links of Klink appears to operate independently at its own bit rate. Therefore, none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest a system having "at least one link trained and set to idle status" or a method in which at least one link is trained at an optimal rate and the status of that link is set to idle. For at least this reason, independent claims 1 and 7, and dependent claims 2-6, are patentable over the cited art. Accordingly, the Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejections of these claims.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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